


PBP FORM 290  <b>PITTSBURGH BUREAU OF POLICE</b> <i>"...honor, integrity, courage, respect, and compassion."</i>		<b>SUBJECT:</b> <b>"RADIO COMMUNICATIONS – GENERAL REGULATIONS"</b>	<b>ORDER NUMBER:</b> <b>66-1</b>
		<b>PLEAC STANDARD:</b> <b>3.3.1</b>	<b>PAGE 1 OF 7</b>
<b>REVISE DATE:</b> <b>10/13/2017</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> <b>7/1/14</b>	<b>ANNUAL REVIEW DATE:</b> <b>JULY</b>	<b>RESCINDS:</b> 
<b>AMENDS:</b>			

**1.0 POLICY OR PURPOSE**

1.1 To establish uniform operating procedures for the assignment of call signs and the effective and efficient use of radio communications within the Bureau of Police

**2.0 FREQUENCY UTILIZATION AND PROTOCOLS**

2.1. Following is a summary of the radio frequencies accessible by Bureau of Police personnel and their respective protocols:

- 2.1.1 **Police 1-3 (PG POL 1 etc)** - Radio traffic is limited to transmission between Dispatch and Field Units. Transmissions from vehicle to vehicle are permitted when necessary to manage the response to a call. Any transmissions of an extended nature between Base and Field Units or between Field Units shall be moved to Pittsburgh Admin.
- 2.1.2 **Police 4 (PG POL 4 - [REDACTED])** - Radio traffic is limited to transmissions between Field Units and [REDACTED]. All transmissions shall be limited to the minimum necessary to complete the inquiry to [REDACTED].
- 2.1.3 [REDACTED] - During normal business hours, Monday through Friday 0800 to 1700, this Channel is restricted to BBI, Fire Prevention and Parking Enforcement. No other utilization is permitted without the authorization of the Communications Bureau EOC Supervisor.
  - 2.1.3.1 [REDACTED]
  - 2.1.3.2 [REDACTED]
  - 2.1.3.3 When the [REDACTED] Channel is staffed by a dispatcher, it is considered to be a Dispatch Channel just as are Police 1-3, Fire 1&2 and EMS 1&2. At these times, radio traffic is limited to transmission between Dispatch and Field Units.
- 2.1.4 **Pittsburgh [REDACTED]**
  - 2.1.4.1 On occasions where the [REDACTED] Channel is being used for a special event or emergency incident, BBI and Parking Enforcement may be authorized to use this channel by Communications.
- 2.1.5 **Pittsburgh [REDACTED]**
- 2.1.6 **Pittsburgh [REDACTED]**
- 2.1.5 **PG EMS 1 ([REDACTED])**
- 2.1.6 **PG EMS 2 ([REDACTED])**
- 2.1.7 **Public Safety [REDACTED]**
  - 2.1.7.1 [REDACTED]
- 2.1.8 **Port Authority Police ([REDACTED])**
- 2.1.9 **University of Pittsburgh Police ([REDACTED])**

2.1.10 Allegheny County Regional ( [REDACTED] )

2.1.11 Pittsburgh Fire 2 ( [REDACTED] )

2.1.12 Pittsburgh Fire 1 ( [REDACTED] )

### **3.0 GENERAL REGULATIONS**

- 3.1 All personnel engaged in field operations shall have constant access to radio communications.
- 3.2 Each Bureau of Police patrol vehicle shall be equipped with a mobile radio transceiver that shall serve as the primary means of communications.
- 3.3 All Officers will be issued an approved radio with the following:
- 3.3.1 Base Radio
  - 3.3.2 Antenna
  - 3.3.3 Shoulder microphone
  - 3.3.4 Belt clip
  - 3.3.5 Radio case
  - 3.3.6 Two batteries
  - 3.3.7 Impress battery charger
  - 3.3.8 Reference guide and owner's manual
- 3.3 All Officers issued a radio shall insure that it is used in the proper manner. It shall not be loaned to any unauthorized person and the officer shall be responsible for safeguarding it against loss or damage. (Refer to Procedural Order #33-3).
- 3.4 All officers and supervisors assigned to Operations will notify communications on the appropriate radio channel that their unit is in operation at the start of their shift and that they are out of service at the end of their shift.
- 3.5.1 The shift lieutenant is responsible for preparing and faxing the shift rundown to Communications prior to the beginning of each shift and for ensuring that each unit notifies Communications, via radio that the unit is in service at the beginning of the shift and out of service at the end of the shift.
- 3.5 Officers shall notify dispatch via radio any time they will not be available for radio communications.
- 3.5.1 If an officer has notified dispatch that they will not be available for radio communications or that they will be out of service for an administrative task or other purpose (e.g. court, lunch, Zone detail, etc.), the officer will provide dispatch with the address location where they will be while held out of service. Officers out for lunch break or on a zone detail are still available for emergency calls.
  - 3.5.2 Any vehicle going out of service before the end of the regularly scheduled tour of duty will require the shift lieutenant to notify dispatch, via radio, of the vehicle going out of service and the reason.
- 3.6 To ensure consistency throughout the Bureau, the established Code Response System, outlined in Section 7.0 of this policy, and the phonetic alphabet outlined in Procedural Order #66-3 shall be used for all radio communications.
- 3.7 Officers shall be responsible for monitoring their assigned radio channel, and should be aware of the status, location and nature of calls in adjoining zones on the same radio channel.
- 3.8 Officers shall minimize their radio transmissions while communicating over their assigned radio channel.
- 3.9 Only officially assigned call signs (as per Procedural Order #66-3) shall be used when transmitting on police radio. The use of proper names is prohibited by FCC regulations.
- 3.10 Each post, vehicle or unit with a specifically assigned call sign will be referred to by that designation. However, exceptions may be made for emergencies or official police business when a specific person is required or requested.
- 3.10.1 The full call sign designation shall be used at all times, and shall not be abbreviated. Abbreviation of call signs may cause confusion to the dispatcher and other units as to the true identity of the transmitting officer. (For

example, unit 3502 may be mistaken for the EMS call sign "502" if the police unit fails to precede the call sign with the number "3.")

- 3.11 The terms "RADIO" and "INDEX" shall be used when transmitting to these elements of the police radio network.
- 3.12 When an officer initiates a traffic stop of a vehicle, he/she shall call out of service on the radio and shall provide the radio dispatcher with the location, license number, make and model of the vehicle being checked, the number, sex and race of its occupants and reason for the stop. Additionally, officers will follow all procedures set forth in Procedural Order #40-4, "Motor Vehicle Stops." After completion of the stop, the officer should promptly return to service.
- 3.13 When transporting prisoners, especially female prisoners, the officer shall contact dispatch and provide the mileage, departing location and destination. The officer will then request a time check. Upon reaching the destination with the prisoner, especially female prisoners, the officer will provide the mileage and will again request a time check.
- 3.14 Any time an officer has discharged any firearm, the discharge shall be reported immediately to the dispatcher as well as to the member's immediate supervisor whether or not someone is injured by such discharge. All additional procedures pertaining to the discharge of a firearm by an officer as outlined in Procedural Order #12-7, "Discharge of Firearms" shall be followed.
- 3.15 It is the responsibility of the EOC Supervisor to make notifications to the Bureau of Police chain of command regarding any incident or crime. For this reason, officers will be required to provide as much information as possible to the dispatcher or the EOC Supervisor so that all pertinent information may be relayed accurately and expeditiously to the appropriate person.

#### **4.0 RESPONDING TO CALLS FOR SERVICE FROM DISPATCH**

- 4.1 At a minimum, officers in patrol are required to contact the EOC dispatcher in the following circumstances:
  - 4.1.1 To acknowledge a call from radio;
  - 4.1.2 Advise arrival at a call;
  - 4.1.3 Advise when a call is completed;
  - 4.1.4 Advise when making an investigative stop or a traffic stop.
- 4.2 Any officer who is given a detail by radio, whether in uniform or plainclothes, shall answer or acknowledge such calls or details given to them promptly.
  - 4.2.1 If an officer fails to respond to the dispatcher after two calls, it shall be the responsibility of the zone supervisor to locate and obtain an acceptable explanation for the failure to respond. Personnel who fail to answer the radio dispatcher shall make a written report to the Assistant Chief of the member's respective branch, through the chain of command, explaining why the call was not answered.
- 4.3 Upon acknowledging a call from radio, officers shall give their departing location and shall notify radio immediately upon arrival at their destination.
- 4.4 Officers shall give specific addresses when calling out at a location. If the specific address is not known, at least the block number or cross street shall be given.
- 4.5 If the actual location of a call is determined to be different from that received from radio, the dispatcher shall be informed of the correct location.
- 4.6 If a vehicle is not returned to service within twenty minutes of arriving at its call and no further communication has been received by radio explaining the status of the responding unit, the dispatcher shall transmit a call for the vehicle to determine if there is a need for assistance.
  - 4.6.1 If the call is not acknowledged, a supervisor or other vehicle shall be dispatched to the scene to check on the welfare of the original unit and to render any assistance.
- 4.7 At the prompt completion of a detail or assignment, a disposition of the detail will be conveyed to radio in a succinct and professional manner by relaying the most applicable of the following choices or by some other brief, appropriate

explanation. If at all possible, an officer shall not tie up the air by engaging in a lengthy explanation of the disposition of the detail to dispatch.

- 4.7.1 GOA - indicates "gone on arrival." The cause of the incident has apparently left and cannot be located.
- 4.7.2 NRN - indicates "no report necessary." The incident did not require a police report to be written.
- 4.7.3 UNFOUNDED – indicates that the incident did not occur as reported, and no police action is needed.
- 4.7.4 REFERRED TO MAGISTRATE or CIVIL MATTER – indicates some other type of prosecution will be in order to clear the incident.
- 4.7.5 UNABLE TO LOCATE – indicates the officer is unable to locate any activity as reported or is unable to locate the complainant.
- 4.7.6 REPORT MADE – indicates some type of police report will be necessary.

4.7.6.1 All calls will generate a CRR#.- A CCR number will be given by radio.  
*(Refer to ACO#05-050)*

4.7.6.2 Supplement Report - indicates the police report is not an original, but is a supplement to an original police report with the original CCR number being used. Note: supplements are only on original Pittsburgh Police reports. Police reports from other jurisdictions will be supplemented by original reports from the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police. We cannot write a supplement to another agency's original report.

4.8 If the officer is writing a supplement and does not know the original CCR number, the officer may obtain it from the APRS system, Record Room or Index.

4.8.1 If the original CCR number cannot be located, a new CCR number will be issued with the approval of the Communications Supervisor on duty.

**5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISPATCHER**

5.1 The dispatcher will be responsible for relaying all information received from the call taker and will provide the responding units with as much authorized information as possible upon initial dispatch. The dispatcher will also provide police units with all additional information as it is received to the EOC.

5.1.1 If the caller does not wish to speak to the police, information about the caller will not be provided over the air to responding units. If information about the caller is needed for investigative purposes, the officer or his/her supervisor must contact the EOC by landline.

5.2 [REDACTED]

5.3 [REDACTED]

5.3.1 [REDACTED]

5.4 Officers shall not routinely have the dispatcher conduct a “callback” on every call. Callbacks should be limited to only absolutely important information required by the officers in responding to their call.

5.5 It is not the responsibility of the dispatcher to make decisions for field personnel. When an officer needs assistance in handling a call, it shall be sought from the field supervisor.

5.6 Officers do not have the authority to tell the dispatcher to disregard future calls to a specific address or area due to bad calls. Instead, the officer should contact a police supervisor and that supervisor will make those determinations.

5.7 Upon completion of an incident where multiple units have responded, the dispatcher shall be responsible for obtaining dispositions from the police units on the scene.

5.8 In addition to the responsibilities set forth in this policy for dispatchers, refer to Procedural Order # 40-5 “Motor Vehicle Pursuits” for dispatcher responsibilities as they pertain to vehicle pursuits.

**6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SHIFT SUPERVISOR**

6.1 Shift supervisors shall insure that all personnel follow the established radio procedures set forth in this policy for all radio transmissions.

6.2 It shall be the responsibility of the shift supervisor to monitor all radio transmissions and assure the use of proper procedure and language.

6.3 Shift supervisors shall be responsible for monitoring their assigned radio channel, and should be aware of the status, location and nature of calls in adjoining zones on the same radio channel.

6.4 All zone or supervisor details are to be communicated to the EOC by radio, not over the telephone, and the location of the detail must be provided to the EOC.

6.4.1

6.5 Only a shift supervisor can put a vehicle out of service, and this must be done over the air.

6.6 The shift supervisor shall readily be available to provide assistance to units in the field who are handling calls for service. It is not the responsibility of the dispatcher to make decisions for field personnel. When an officer needs assistance in handling a call, it shall be sought from the shift supervisor.

6.7 It shall be the responsibility of the shift supervisor to tell a dispatcher to disregard future calls to a specific address or area due to bad calls.

6.8 It shall be the responsibility of the shift supervisor to monitor any request to clear the air and, in the event the air is cleared, the shift supervisor will insure that all provisions contained in Section 8.0 below are followed.

**7.0 CODE RESPONSE SYSTEM FOR REQUESTING BACK-UP RESPONSE**

7.1 All personnel will use the following “Code Response System” to communicate to other officers and to the dispatcher the need to speed up or slow down other responding units when back-up is requested.

7.2 Any officer who is involved in an off-duty situation requiring that help be summoned should, when calling for help, advise Communications of the appropriate back-up code so that the units to be dispatched will know how to respond.

7.3 It shall be the responsibility of the first arriving unit on the scene to use one of the following codes to advise the dispatcher of the appropriate response for back up units to the scene. The use of the following codes for back-up shall only be applicable once an officer is on-scene, and shall not be determined while an officer is en route to a call.

7.3.1

7.3.2

7.3.3

- 7.3.3.1 [REDACTED]
- 7.3.3.2 Officers are reminded that the privileges granted to operators of emergency vehicles under Section 3105 of the Vehicle Code shall only apply when the vehicle operator is making use of an audible signal AND a visual signal. *When responding with lights only, operators of emergency vehicles must come to a complete stop before proceeding past a stop sign and must obey all traffic signals. Operators may not exceed the posted speed limit or disregard regulations governing direction of movement.*
- 7.3.3.3 [REDACTED]
- 7.3.3.4 [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- 7.3.5 [REDACTED]
- 7.3.6 [REDACTED]

**8.0 CLEARING THE AIR**

- 8.1 A request may not be made to clear the air except in an emergency situation (a search of a building with an open door is not considered an emergency).
- 8.2 The officer requesting the air to be cleared will state the emergency.
- 8.3 The shift lieutenant must be notified immediately by communications when the air is cleared for any reason.
- 8.4 The shift lieutenant will ensure other units remain off of the air until the emergency is completed.
- 8.5 The shift lieutenant will ensure other emergencies, arising from call received at the EOC or from other field units, are handled without delay.
- 8.6 The shift lieutenant will ensure that the airwaves are opened for regular transmissions as soon as the emergency does not require exclusive need of the airwaves.

**9.0 PROFESSIONAL DEMEANOR AND TERMINOLOGY DURING RADIO TRANSMISSIONS**

- 9.1 All personnel shall follow the established radio procedures set forth in this policy for all radio transmissions.
- 9.2 At all times, officers will exhibit a professional demeanor in their radio transmissions and proper terminology will be used.
- 9.3 No officer shall tamper with any police radio equipment or interfere with any police broadcast or transmission or make unwarranted transmissions, use profane language or make any insulting or derogatory remarks while transmitting on the police radio channels.
- 9.4 Officers shall not argue, debate or become involved in discussions with radio dispatchers or any other person over details, assignments or instructions transmitted over the radio.

**10.0 AUTHORIZATION TO REVIEW OR REQUEST AUDIO TAPES OF CALLS OR TRANSMISSIONS**

- 10.1 In order for any police officer to obtain a recording of a radio transmission for whatever lawful, internal purpose such as the investigation of any criminal offense, it will be necessary for that officer to make such request in writing through the chain of command to the Commander of the officer's respective duty location.
- 10.1.1 This will be done by completing and submitting the authorized EOC Tape Request Form. Once the Commander approves the request, the form will then be forwarded to the EOC.
- 10.2 No recording of a radio transmission will be released to any source external to the Bureau of Police (other departments or agencies, media, etc.) without the permission of the Chief or Deputy Chief of Police.

Approved By:



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Scott Schubert  
Chief of Police